

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 331

By Beavers

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize Dr. Michael G. Harris upon his induction into the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame.

WHEREAS, agriculture has been a cornerstone of Wilson County since the county's founding in 1799, and those citizens involved in farming have always been a vital part of the community; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should specially recognize those outstanding citizens who dedicate their lives to promoting the importance of agriculture in our society; and

WHEREAS, one such estimable individual is Dr. Michael G. Harris, who was inducted into the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame on April 7, 2015, for his ongoing legacy as a veterinarian and cattle farmer; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Michael Harris, fondly known as Dr. Mike, was born in the Gladeville community of Wilson County on the family farm, G. A. Harris and Son, which is now a Century Farm; the farm was used by his grandfather and father as a dairy farm for a time before changing to a beef cattle farm before Dr. Harris was born; and

WHEREAS, Mike Harris grew up raising and showing Hereford cattle; during his middle and high school years, he was active in 4-H and Future Farmers of America (FFA), was a member of the State 4-H Council, was chosen as an Outstanding FFA Leader in 1970, and was awarded the Degree of American Farmer in Kansas City at the FFA National Convention in 1972; and

WHEREAS, he began his college career at Cumberland University majoring in agriculture; while there, he took an organic chemistry class in which he excelled, and,

encouraged by his organic chemistry professor, he decided to study veterinary medicine and transferred to the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, before attending veterinary school at Auburn University and obtaining his degree in 1978; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Harris began his veterinary practice in Austin, Texas, where he practiced for five years before returning to Tennessee to buy a farm in Gladeville and start his veterinary practice, Animal Care Center, in Mt. Juliet; and

WHEREAS, on his farm, Dr. Mike Harris resumed raising Shorthorn and Hereford cattle, ultimately settling on the Saler breed; excelling in the study of the Saler breed's genetics, he exhibited the National Champion Saler bull, Whiskey River, in Denver, Colorado, in 2012; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Harris and his brother Keith have made generous contributions to the 4-H program, and continue to do so today, lending their Saler show heifers and steers to 4-H members who otherwise would not be able to show; and

WHEREAS, a leader in the cattle breeding industry, Dr. Mike Harris served two terms as president of the Wilson County Livestock Association and served as vice president of the Tennessee Saler Association; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Harris's veterinary practice has thrived. At its peak, the Animal Care Center employed six other veterinarians and fifty-three support staff who served over 40,000 animal patients annually; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his professional endeavors, he was an active member of the Big Brothers of Mt. Juliet, for which he served two terms as president; a member of the board of the Bank of the South for four years; and a member of the community council for Wilson Bank and Trust; and

WHEREAS, a deeply spiritual individual, Dr. Mike Harris is a lifelong member and supporter of Gladeville United Methodist Church, serving faithfully for many years; and

WHEREAS, devoted to his family, Dr. Harris enjoys the loving support of his wife of thirty years, Denise Holland Harris, and their children, Drew Harris and Haley Harris; and

WHEREAS, the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame honors those dedicated citizens who have committed their lives to developing and maintaining the highest standards and

principles, and it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly honor Dr. Michael Harris for his valuable service to agriculture and the farming community; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and recognize Dr. Michael G. Harris on the occasion of his induction into the Wilson County Agricultural Hall of Fame, as we reflect fondly upon his many contributions to upholding the agricultural traditions of Wilson County and the State of Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.